

REMARKS

A final rejection of all pending claims was mailed on February 4, 2009. The claim amendments above accompany a request for continued examination (RCE) filed on July 2, 2009. In the amendment above, Applicants have amended claims 1, 3-12, 14-15, 17-26, 28-29, and 31-42. As such, claims 1, 3-15, 17-29 and 31-42 are pending. Applicants respectfully request continued examination of the pending claims in view of the amendments above and the following remarks.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC 102 and 103

Claims 1, 3-8, 15, 17-22, 29, and 31-36 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as anticipated by Schwarzhoff (US 6,591,260). Of these, claims 1, 15 and 29 are independent claims. The remaining dependent claims 9-14, 23-28, and 37-42 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schwarzhoff in view of Stone (US 2002/0107889).

Without conceding the correctness of the outstanding rejections and in order to advance prosecution on the merits, Applicants have amended each of the pending independent claims 1, 15 and 29. In addition, Applicants have amended dependent claims for consistency. The amendments add no new matter. Support for the amendments appear in the specification as originally filed, for example, in Figures 2A-C and 3 and text accompanying these figures.

Applicants submit that each of the independent claims 1, 15 and 29, as amended, defines subject matter that is patentable over Schwarzhoff, as do the dependent claims. Applicants' distinguishing of Schwarzhoff from the present claims should not be taken as an admission that Schwarzhoff is properly considered prior art under any sub-section of 35 U.S.C. 102.

First with respect to claim 1, Schwarzhoff does not disclose or suggest a computer-implemented method that includes, among other things, "providing, as part of the initiated electronic purchasing process, a sourcing graphical user interface on a display device of the purchasing computing system, the sourcing graphical user interface having a first area to enter, as a source of supply in the electronic purchasing process, a supplier included in the internal contact directory, the sourcing graphical user interface further having a second area to initiate a search for additional suppliers not included in the internal contact directory, the second area including a listing of at least one external contact directory of suppliers, each of the at least one

external contact directory being hosted by an external service provider that is not the service provider of the purchasing computing system and the internal contact directory.”

In addition with respect to claim 1, Schwartzhoff does not disclose or suggest a computer-implemented method that includes “upon receiving a user selection of one of the listed at least one external contact directory, establishing electronic communication, by the purchasing computing system, with the selected external contact directory, and receiving information from the selected external contact directory to provide, on the display device of the purchasing computing system, a display of a directory of the suppliers in the selected external contact directory.” Further yet, Schwartzhoff does not disclose or suggest, as is also recited in claim 1, “upon receiving, at the purchasing computing system, a user selection of one of the suppliers included in the selected external contact directory, sending an electronic request from the purchasing computing system and to the selected external contact directory, the electronic request identifying the selected supplier, and in response receiving an electronic response that includes predefined required information to create in the internal contact directory a contact entry for the selected supplier.” Finally, Schwartzhoff does not disclose or suggest, as is also recited in claim 1, “creating, using the information from the electronic response, a new contact entry in the internal contact directory, the new contact entry for the selected supplier,” and “assigning the selected supplier as a source of supply in the electronic purchasing process.”

The claimed method of Applicants' claim 1 sets forth a method that integrates new suppliers into a purchasing computing system in a novel and non-obvious manner that is neither disclosed nor suggested by Schwartzhoff or any other reference of record. The recited “graphical user interface,” allows a user to gain access, through a single graphical user interface, to both supplier contacts in an internal contact directory (and thus, supplier contacts who may already be approved suppliers), as well as suppliers whose information is provided in an external contact directory. In addition, by receiving from the external contact directory “predefined required information to create in the internal contact directory a contact entry for the selected supplier,” as recited in claim 1, it is possible, and as part of an electronic procurement process, to import the supplier's contact information easily into the procurement computing system, so that for example it is possible that supplier approval processes may be automatically initiated on the new supplier (see for example, dependent claims 9-14). In addition, the new supplier is used in

the particular electronic procurement process in connection with which the new contact entry was made. As such, it is made certain that procurement actions do not occur without a full record of the supplier in the internal contact directory.

As such, the claim 1 subject matter is directed to a method that integrates in a very effective manner new suppliers into an organization's procurement process. This method is neither disclosed nor suggested by Schwartzhoff or any other reference of record including Stone which is cited in connection with certain dependent claims. As such, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 1 and 3-14 be withdrawn.

Independent claim 15 is directed to an article, and independent claim 29 is directed to a system. Claims 15 and 29 are patentable over Schwarzhoff and Stone for the reasons discussed above in connection with claim 1, as are dependent claims 17-28 and claims 31-42. As such, Applicants also request that the rejection of claims 15, 17-29, and 31-42 be withdrawn.

Conclusion

Applicants submit that claims 1, 3-15, 17-29, and 31-42 are in condition for allowance, and requests that the Examiner issue a notice of allowance.

It is believed that all of the pending claims have been addressed. However, the absence of a reply to a specific rejection, issue or comment does not signify agreement with or concession of that rejection, issue or comment. In addition, because the arguments made above may not be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or other claims) that have not been expressed. Finally, nothing in this paper should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this paper, and the amendment of any claim does not necessarily signify concession of unpatentability of the claim prior to its amendment.

Applicant : Schwarze, et al.
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Please charge deposit account 06-1050 in the amount of \$810 for the Request for Continued Examination fee and \$490 for the Petition for Extension of Time fee. Please apply any other charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

Date:

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